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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [CG](#)

SUBJECT: NORTH KIVU CLASHES LIKELY

REF: KIGALI 371

Classified By: Poloff Meghan Moore for Reasons 1.4 B and D

¶11. (C) Summary. MONUC field offices are preparing to repatriate Rwandan Hutu rebels (FDLR) in an increasingly tense atmosphere. The political-military situation in N. Kivu is unclear, and MONUC military patrols have reported increased suspicious activity by ex-ANC (RCD/G armed wing) soldiers in Masisi and Rutshuru. Two FARDC brigades clashed about 60 miles northwest of Goma April 3 while tracking FDLR soldiers. As of April 6, the situation had returned to normal, but more clashes are likely. END SUMMARY.

MONUC Gears Up for FDLR Repatriation

¶12. (C) A Butembo-based MONUC officer told poloff April 6 that MONUC had made the necessary preparations to start repatriating FDLR from northern North Kivu right away, and that many FDLR in the area of Lubero were ready to return to Rwanda. He thought, however, that Rwandan Foreign Minister Murigande's recent statements were discouraging (reftel). Unlike in the past, the Butembo-based officer believed Mbisa Nyamwisi (Regional Cooperation Minister and head of the RCD/K-ML) was "on board" with the FDLR repatriation process, but Governor Serufuli was trying to undermine the process.

¶13. (C) Per MONUC internal reporting, MONUC Bukavu has been preparing for South Kivu FDLR repatriation. A Bukavu-based MONUC officer told poloff April 6 FDLR soldiers in South Kivu are sitting on the fence, waiting for their hierarchy to tell them whether to return to Rwanda or stay in South Kivu. The Bukavu-based officer said that Murigande's recent statements were not helpful, and suggested that the US and UK coordinate a strong message to encourage the GOR to accept FDLR repatriation.

North Kivu Developments

¶14. (C) A Kinshasa-based MONUC officer told poloff April 5 that the situation in N. Kivu was unclear, and MONUC military patrols over the past few weeks have reported increased movement, suspicious activity, and non-cooperation by 12th Brigade (ex-ANC) soldiers located in Masisi and Rutshuru. Source added that MONUC milobs continue to receive reports from local civilians in Rutshuru of Rwandan incursions, but clarified that it was difficult to determine whether civilians meant ex-ANC soldiers or actual Rwandans. Last week, source reported MONUC soldiers in Goma searched a truck and found a few mortar launchers and mortars. The troops with the truck said it belonged to the 113th battalion. The truck reportedly belongs to Governor Serufuli.

¶15. (C) Two FARDC brigades clashed about 60 miles northwest of Goma April 3 while reportedly tracking FDLR soldiers. Radio Okapi reported that about 10 people were killed, including one soldier from each brigade, and several were wounded. As of April 6, the situation had returned to normal. North Kivu Military Regional Commander Amisi told MONUC that soldiers from the 18th brigade (ex-APC-- military wing of the RCD/K-ML) mistakenly fired upon soldiers from the 12th brigade (ex-ANC), who they believed to be FDLR. The 18th Brigade temporarily withdrew to Miriki (about 10 miles west of Kanyabayonga) from Kimaka and the 12th Brigade advanced to Kimaka. The two brigade commanders met April 4 and agreed to return to their original positions and conduct joint operations against the FDLR.

Comment

¶16. (C) More clashes between ex-ANC units and other units in North Kivu are likely due to poor communication and coordination, mistrust, and possible ex-ANC aggressive movements. Potential large-scale FDLR movements could contribute to the confusion. Post will continue to monitor closely the political-military situation in both Kivus.
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